

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts  
Council Meeting  
Thursday, May 26, 2011  
4:00 PM  
RISCA Offices  
Providence RI

Council Members Present: Carrie Zaslow, Vice Chairman; Jean Rondeau, Secretary; Beverly Blais; Nancy Chapman; Ann Clanton; Dana Neugent; Regina Partridge; Mary K. Talbot; and David Wax.

Council Members Unable to Attend: Bill Brackett, Chairman; Carolyn Peck, and Andrea Valentini.

Staff Members Present Randall Rosenbaum, Executive Director; Steven Feinberg, Executive Director Film & Television; Carol Conley, Asst. to Exec. Director of Film & Television; Cristina DiChiera, Director Individual Artists; Donna Fiske, Fiscal & Office Manager; Elizabeth Keithline, Project Grants for Organizations/ Public Art Program; and Elena Calderón Patiño, Program Director Community Arts.

Public: Michael Nugent, Policy Analyst, House of Representatives.

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Vice Chair Carrie Zaslow called the meeting to order at 4:10 PM, in the absence of Chairman Bill Brackett.

Approval of Minutes – February 17, 2011 meeting:

The following changes were noted: Jean Rondeau should be listed as Secretary instead of Mary K. Talbot. Nancy Chapman was present for the meeting: she was listed as absent.

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the February 17, 2011 meeting with changes

*(Motion: David Wax; seconded by Beverly Blais, approved unanimously)*

Approval of Minutes – April 6, 2011 meeting:

The following changes were noted: Jean Rondeau should be listed as Secretary instead of Mary K. Talbot.

A motion was made to approve the Minutes of the April 6, 2011 meeting with changes

*(Motion: David Wax; seconded by Regina Partridge, approved unanimously)*

#### Big Yellow School Bus:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported on the success of the Big Yellow School Bus program. There are 103 schools that have participated throughout the state, \$31,561 in grants awarded, and 10,844 students have attended arts/cultural events through this program. Last year we transported about 7,500 through this program. Bank of America has shown an interest in contributing funds to help support this program and plan to decide how much if any funds they will contribute in the next few weeks.

#### Tourism Luncheon:

The tourism luncheon went very well. There was a good collaboration to bring the different cultures in our community together for this event. Elena Calderón Patiño reported that the theme of this year's Tourism Unity luncheon was "Partnerships and Collaborations" and RISCA helped to showcase the different cultures at the event by commissioning centerpieces from four different cultures (Latino/ African/ African American/ Native American) and through the presentation of performing artists from diverse communities before and during the luncheon.

#### Give Me Five:

Mr. Feinberg reported on the great responses to the third annual Give Me Five youth film festival event on May 21. There were a great group of student filmmakers from throughout the state exhibiting their films. The students were very pleased to have the opportunity to show their films and receive feedback from professionals.

#### Body of Proof:

Mr. Feinberg reported that the TV series Body of Proof is moving to Los Angeles after filming their premiere season here in Rhode Island. Although ABC and the production crew liked their time in Rhode Island and invested \$500,000 on building out a warehouse in Warwick into a production studio, the uncertainty about the availability of a motion picture tax credit here in Rhode Island, along with the certain availability of a tax credit in California was a factor in the production moving to the West Coast.

#### Update on the 2011 Legislative Session:

Mr. Rosenbaum reported that there were few substantive bills presented in the current legislative session having an impact on the arts beyond Governor Chafee's budget proposal. In the budget itself the major issues were the proposed elimination of the motion picture tax credit; the proposed expansion of the state sales tax to include admissions to cultural events and arts education activities; and the proposed \$100,000 in cuts to the Council's discretionary grant budget. Mr. Rosenbaum reported that it is unclear at this point how each of these proposals will fare in the General Assembly.

#### Nominating Committee:

Vice Chair Carrie Zaslow reminded the Council that, according to the Council's Procedures and Regulations, a slate of officers needed to be chosen for presentation to Council at its June meeting. Traditionally a Nominating Committee is appointed by the Council in May and charged with this responsibility. The situation is more challenging this year because a majority of the Council is scheduled to either be reappointed or replaced. The Governor's Office has prepared a list of appointments, but they have not yet gone to the Senate for their advice and consent. This degree of uncertainty makes this annual activity more difficult.

Chairman Brackett had asked David Wax to chair the Nominating Committee. Beverly Blais and Dana Neugent volunteered to serve as members of the committee.

A motion was made to approve the selection of David Wax to serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee, with Beverly Blais and Dana Neugent as members

*(Motion: Jean Rondeau; seconded by Beverly Blais, approved unanimously)*

Review of Budget:

Mr. Rosenbaum presented a first draft of a budget for fiscal year 2012, which has traditionally been done at the May Council meeting. Mr. Rosenbaum remarked that this year the budget has more than the usual number of "uncertainties". Earlier in the month we received word on our federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. In spite of a huge political fight in Washington over many budget issues, including federal support for the arts, humanities and public broadcasting, federal funds for next year are down about 9%; the grants portion of this award is down about 13%. That, combined with the Governor's proposed 17% cut in discretionary grant funding means that many RISCA programs will see substantial cuts. A summary was provided to the Council based on the information we have; adjustments will be made to our budget once the state budget is approved; hopefully by our June 30th meeting.

A motion was made to accept the proposed FY2012 draft budget

*(Motion: Mary K. Talbot; seconded by Beverly Blais, approved unanimously)*

A Motion was made to adjourn the meeting

*(Motion: David Wax; seconded by Regina Partridge, approved unanimously)*